

The City is Only a Phone Call Away

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NEIGHBORLY TIPS...

When walking your dog down the street, be considerate of your neighbors and your neighborhood. Take a plastic bag or “pooper scooper” to remove your animal’s waste from tree lawns, public walks, streets, recreation areas or private property.

(Parma Codified Ordinance 618.16 passed November 20, 2006)



Parma City Hall Website	www.cityofparma-oh.gov
Parma City Hall (General)	(440) 885-8000
Mayor’s Office	(440) 885-8001
Mayor’s Executive Assistant	(440) 885-8001
Human Resources	(440) 885-8167
Parks & Recreation Department	(440) 885-8144
Safety Department	(440) 885-8174
Senior Center	(440) 885-8800
Service Department	(440) 885-8184
Communications Department	(440) 885-8181
Community Development	(216) 661-7372
Economic Development/Grants	(440) 885-8860
Public Housing	(216) 661-2015
Building Commissioner/Engineering	(440) 885-8032
Civil Service	(440) 885-8061
Auditor’s Office	(440) 885-8022
Law Department	(440) 885-8132
Resident Services	(440) 885-8083
Tax Department	(440) 885-8045
Treasurer’s Office	(440) 885-8812
Parma Police (non emergency)	(440) 885-1234
Municipal Court	(440) 887-7400
Clerk of Courts	(440) 887-7400

City of Parma
6611 Ridge Road
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Fair Housing is the Law

The City of Parma’s Fair Housing Ordinance prohibits housing discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status or handicap.

If you need further information regarding Parma’s Fair Housing Ordinance or would like to file a Fair Housing Complaint, please contact the Fair Housing Administrator in the Parma Law Department at (440) 885-8132.

State of the City Stresses “Progress Through Partnerships”

In his State of the City address given in February, Mayor Dean DePiero stressed “Progress through Partnerships.” Given at Parmatown Mall, the speech can be accessed under the “News” tab on the City’s website at www.cityofparma-oh.gov.

The City of PARMA News

MAY, 2007

Dear Residents:

I hope you enjoy this “spring edition” of The City of Parma News.

Citizen response has been overwhelmingly positive since we implemented this newsletter. This publication, along with the City’s website (www.cityofparma-oh.gov) is yet another example of how my

administration continually seeks to communicate with residents about vital issues impacting our city and to provide you with timely information.

One important issue that you may already be aware of is Issue 12 – a police operating levy that will be on the May 8th election ballot. The need for a fully staffed police department is critical if our neighborhoods are to remain safe. Presently, Parma only has 86 patrol officers to guard the city 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. This number is down from 106 officers – a drastic reduction in force that puts this city and its neighborhoods at risk.

The hard reality is that without proper police staffing, Parma residents become vulnerable to crimes against property and persons.

Issue 12 will provide much needed funding to bolster police presence in your neighborhood, purchase equipment needed to fight crime, and enable the police department to increase traffic enforcement, especially in the school zones.

The average homeowner, with a residence worth \$136,000, would see an increase of around \$7 per month in property tax if Issue 12 passes – a small amount to keep Parma safe and to keep property values strong.

Without the passage of Issue 12, residents can expect cuts in other vital city services such as fewer street repairs, reduction of programs for seniors and curtailment of recreation activities for youth.

In other matters, the majority of the City employee labor contracts have been finalized. Fair agreements have been struck for not only you, the

taxpayer, but for municipal workers. This includes asking for and receiving healthcare contributions from our employees for the first time.

For those who haven’t heard, the Department of Parks and Recreation has relocated its offices from Schaaf Community Center to the south concourse of Parmatown Mall. This move allows this fundamental department of government to be more accessible.

With spring already here, the Service Department will concentrate its resources and efforts on repairing roads and streets that were damaged over the winter months.

On May 19th the Fire Department will unveil two new fire stations that have been under construction since last year. An “open house” is scheduled for each station and our residents will be able to take a tour of these state-of-the-art facilities on that date.

In closing, my administration and I look forward to continuing to serve you. I hope that you will find the contents of this newsletter to be a valuable resource.

Sincerely,

Dean DePiero
Mayor of Parma

Parma will place Police Levy on May Ballot

Energized by massive reforms implemented within the police department, Parma Mayor Dean DePiero said that the city has placed a police operating levy on the May ballot to raise much needed funds for the Police Department.

Parma voters previously turned down police levy renewals in 2003 and 2004. As a result of the defeat of the last two levy attempts, the police department has shrunk from 106 officers to a low of 86 sworn members. The children's sex crime unit has been curtailed; the detective bureau understaffed; K-9 unit and DARE program disbanded and the motorcycle unit, responsible for traffic enforcement, cut 50 percent.

"The Parma police department is operating at critically low levels," DePiero said. "This not only jeopardizes the safety of residents, but the safety of the community as a whole."

Since taking office in 2004, DePiero, in concert with Safety Director Greg Baeppler and Police Chief Dan Hoffman, has initiated and sustained major and sweeping policies and procedures to ensure financial accountability within the police department.

If the police operating levy is passed by voters on May 8th Parma homeowners would pay about \$7 a month based on a \$136,000 home.

DePiero outlined the reforms initiated within the police department as part of an ongoing effort to restore public confidence. Among them are:

- A new, fair labor contract has been negotiated with the police union that eliminates clauses not in the public interest such as the elimination of discretionary overtime and sick time abuse.

- The disciplinary process within the department has been streamlined.

- Accountability and evaluation processes have been implemented to ensure a "check and balance."

Also, he noted, traffic enforcement and efficiency has been maintained at maximum production given the understaffed state of the department. In addition, the department has "leapfrogged" from 1950's technology to state-of-the-art law enforcement technologies that include computer terminals in police cruisers, Tasers, in-car cameras and the ongoing training of officers. All of the new technology has been implemented WITHOUT the expenditure of public funds but rather through competitive grants and forfeited drug funds.

"It is time for Parma to move forward in bringing our police department up to standards for a municipality our size," DePiero said. "My Administration has taken the necessary steps to ensure the accountability of the police department and has put in place those reforms to maintain that accountability."

"It's a new day and a new police department," DePiero said. "And it's a department that citizens can be proud of as they protect and serve."



To raise public awareness about law enforcement...

Parma PD to Launch Citizens' Police Academy

Did you ever wonder if you have what it takes to be a police officer?

Parma residents over the age of 18 with a genuine interest in law enforcement will have the opportunity to find out when the Parma police department launches its "Citizens' Police Academy." The first class is scheduled to begin April 28, with others to follow in coming months.

The purpose of the academy is to give citizens an "up-close and personal" look into the world of law enforcement including crime scene processing, evidence collecting and weapons training. During the 10-week course, participants will also have a chance to observe Parma's Special Weapons and Tactics Team (SWAT).

Classes will meet on Saturday mornings at the Police Department (5555 Powers Boulevard) from 9 AM until noon. Graduation ceremonies are scheduled for early summer, and will be held in conjunction with a Parma City Council meeting.

Police Captain Wayne Schmigel is coordinating the academy. Specialized officers, prosecutors and jail administrators will be discussing their areas of expertise.

There is no cost for the class but enrollment is limited to 16 participants. Applicants who are not accepted into the initial program due to space considerations will be eligible for a later academy session. Persons who work in Parma are also eligible for the program. Individuals who have been convicted of a felony **cannot** participate.

Each student will be encouraged to ride along on an eight-hour shift with a patrol officer. Also included in the curriculum is the opportunity to experience a "shoot or no-shoot" scenario in limited visibility conditions. Other areas to be covered are: use of force, police communications technology, criminal investigation of narcotics, and courtroom procedures.

Requests for applications as well as additional information about the Citizens' Police Academy should be directed to Capt. Wayne Schmigel at (440) 887-7328.

Mayor DePiero Applauds Independent Blue Ribbon Panel's Report

Parma Mayor Dean DePiero has applauded a report released by an independent Blue Ribbon Commission comprised of area business and community leaders whose task it was to assess the finances and services of Ohio's seventh largest city. The report was issued earlier this year.

Among the commissions recommendations to bolster municipal finances in the wake of lost income tax revenue is to place a new police department operating levy on the ballot in 2007.

Other recommendations to augment revenue and improve Parma's image are: a call for point-of-sale inspections on residential and rental properties, establishment of a Civilian Police Review Board and joining a county-wide sanitary sewer maintenance program.

Commission members met with City administrators and collected data on areas such as finances and taxation, city image and leisure services, public safety, housing and economic development.

The committee report emphasized the economic impact facing the city with the loss of income tax revenues from companies such as TOPS which closed in 2006, and the loss of approximately 800 General Motors jobs after the company offered employee buyouts last year.

"It is clear that the City of Parma must band together if we are to continue being a premiere municipality known for first-class city services," DePiero said.

DePiero said that a key to Parma's future viability is "Progress through Partnerships" – collaboration with City Hall, local businesses, churches, the school district and residents.

"City Hall cannot do it alone," DePiero said. "There must be a concerted effort by all working in harmony to ensure Parma's viability."

The panel made 15 specific recommendations to the City, which include:

- Developing a revised Master Plan to be put before voters for approval.
- Formulating a comprehensive design plan for commercial properties.
- Offering incentives to developers to build upscale housing in the city.
- Developing a business incubator facility to support entrepreneurial initiatives that can stimulate Parma's economy.
- Enhancing efforts to establish collaborative endeavors within the city, possibly using citizen volunteers.



From the Left - Barry Franklin (Parma Community General Hospital), Denise McCray-McCall (Cleveland State University), Vincent Tenaglia (Cleveland State University), William Ziganti (retiree), Rev. Todd Biermann (Calvary Lutheran Church - chairman), Kevin Yaughner (Marc Glassman, Inc.), Sylvester Murray (Cleveland State University), Robin Darden-Thomas (Cuyahoga County Treasurer's Office), David Nedrich (General Motors), and Thomas Jones (Marionette, Inc. - not pictured).

THE TREASURER'S NOTES



Dear Resident,

The Treasurer's Office continually explores ways to be more accessible to residents and to serve you better.

One of the services we provide is preparation of City income tax returns at no charge to Parma residents. In addition, the Treasurer's Office offers extended hours during the "tax crunch" months of March and April. This year, residents were able to come to City Hall or enjoy the convenience of free city tax preparation at Parmatown Mall, in the newly-opened offices of the City's Department of Parks and Recreation. We are pleased about this new option, and we hope to continue the new service next year.

Since becoming Treasurer, I have implemented financial meetings for residents to outline how your tax dollars are being spent. These sessions are held in cooperation with Auditor Dennis Kish's office. Auditor

Kish contributes years of experience and knowledge of city finances. Together, we want to give residents a "full picture" of the city's revenues and expenditures.

Our next meeting will be held on **Thursday, May 17 at 6:30 PM** in City Council Chambers of Parma City Hall.

Please feel free to phone me at (440) 885-8812 if you have any questions or comments about the Treasurer's Office and our operation. We're here to serve you.

Sincerely,
Anthony Zielinski, Treasurer



Victim's Advocate Program: Helping Victims to “Pick Up The Pieces”

BY TIM DOBECK,
LAW DIRECTOR

Have you or someone you know been a victim of crime? If so, then you are



probably aware that most victims of crime wonder what their rights are as victims and what their role will be in the criminal justice system. Chief Prosecutor Timothy G. Dobeck knew that a Victim's Advocate would be a great asset not only to the prosecutors in his office, but more importantly to the victims that his office serves. In January of 2000, with the assistance of then State Representative Dean DePiero and a grant from the Ohio Attorney General's Office, the Victim's Advocate position was created in the Parma Prosecutor's Office. The Victims' Advocate Program has now completed its seventh year of assisting victims of crime.

The Victims' Advocate provides victims with important information from the Ohio Attorney General's Office, such as Applications for Victim's Compensation from the Victim's Compensation Fund and the booklet, "Picking Up the Pieces," Your Rights and Responsibilities as a Crime Victim. The Advocate can assist victims in preparing their application for compensation and can answer questions that the victim may have during the process. The Victims' Advocate can also help make referrals to other agencies that the victims may benefit from working with.

In certain types of cases, such as domestic violence cases, victims have the right to a temporary protection order. The Victims' Advocate prepares motions for temporary protection orders and explains the order and what will take place at the hearing for the temporary protection order. The Advocate makes the victims aware of other types of orders (i.e. civil protection orders) that can be obtained through other Courts.

Should you have questions about the Victims' Advocate Program, please feel free to contact the Victims' Advocate, Sherry M. Purge at 440-887-7400 ext. 7413. If you are a victim of domestic violence, you may also benefit from contacting the Domestic Violence Center at their 24-Hour Helpline, 216-391-HELP (4357).

City's Department of Parks and Recreation Moves to New Location

The City's Department of Parks and Recreation has moved to the south concourse of Parmatown Mall. The agency was located at Schaaf Community Center until the move in February.

"Our new location will enable us to better serve all of Parma's neighborhoods in a centralized location," said Director Mickey Vittardi.



"Let the games begin..." Parma officials cut the ribbon to officially open the offices of the Department of Parks and Recreation, Pictured (L to R) Parks and Recreation Director Mickey Vittardi, Ward 1 Councilwoman Mary Galinas, Mayor Dean DePiero, Ward 5 Councilman Thomas Regas and Ward 7 Councilman Kenneth Ramser.

Frequently Asked Questions About the Parma Police Operating Levy (Issue 12)

- Q.

Parma voters have turned down two police levies in the past. Why should I vote for the levy now?
- A.

Since the DePiero administration took office in 2004, reforms have been implemented within the management of the police department to curtail excessive overtime and increase the supervision over requests for sick time leave. These measures were put in place to ensure tax dollars are spent prudently. Under the leadership of Chief Dan Hoffman, the City and the police senior command staff have worked hard to rebuild trust in the department.
- Q.

How much will this cost the average homeowner?
- A.

The cost to an average homeowner, which is based on a \$136,000 home, will be about \$7 a month. This is a small amount to ensure **safer neighborhoods**, increase traffic enforcement and to keep Parma's **property values strong**.
- Q.

How would passage of the levy affect those on fixed incomes?
- A.

Parma residents already pay some of the lowest income and property taxes when compared to other municipalities in Cuyahoga County. Again, if Issue 12 passes, it will cost an average homeowner (which is based on a \$136,000 home) about \$7 a month.
- Q.

Parma is a safe city already. Why is it necessary to even pass a police operating levy?
- A.

Parma must have a well-equipped, well-staffed and well-trained police department to protect our city and neighborhoods. The police department now is **extremely understaffed** for a city our size. Currently, there are only 86 uniformed officers to protect the City around the clock, 365 days a year. This is down from a force of 106.
- Q.

What will happen if the police operating levy fails?
- A.

The City will be forced to continue operating the Police Department out

of the General Fund. That's nearly half of the City's operating budget. This means that other municipal services will suffer, including road and street repairs, snow plowing, recreation programs for youth, and senior services. Also, the City will be **unable** to hire additional police officers and that puts neighborhoods at risk.

Parma to Pilot Child Protection Project

The City of Parma, with the support of Cuyahoga County Prosecutor Bill Mason's office and in cooperation with the Parma City Schools, has launched a pilot project called "Operation Child Protect" – a voluntary initiative that would provide an Identification Kit to parents of children in kindergarten. The project is designed to serve as a tool for law enforcement agencies in the event of child abduction or other crimes committed against a minor. Participation in the program is at the sole discretion of a parent or guardian.

The Identification Kit would include a recent photo of the child, fingerprints, a DNA sample and educational materials about keeping children safe. Fingerprinting and the collection of DNA samples will be conducted at select Parma schools by the Parma Police Department, the Auxiliary Police and experienced volunteers. The materials would then be turned over to a parent or guardian for safekeeping.

"The purpose of the Identification Kit is to provide parents and guardians the tools law enforcement needs to help, for instance, locate a missing child," said Safety Director Greg Baeppler. "And while Parma is certainly a safe town to raise a family, this ID kit is merely another tool for law enforcement officials in the event of an emergency situation involving a minor."

Spending per capita comparison

Prepared by CSU for Blue Ribbon Commission

The City of Parma manages taxpayer dollars well as evidenced by this chart prepared by Cleveland State University for the independent Blue Ribbon Commission. The Commission was created last year to assess the finances and services of Ohio's seventh largest city. During 2006, the municipality spent \$515.62 per resident to provide all municipal services.

Municipal Government Per Capita Spending, 2006

CITY	GENERAL	POPULATION ¹ FUND BUDGET	PER CAPITA SPENDING
Brook Park	\$ 25,200,000	21,218	\$ 1,187.67
Strongsville	\$ 31,552,000	43,858	\$ 719.41
Euclid	\$ 36,764,444	52,717	\$ 697.39
Lakewood	\$ 37,332,889	56,646	\$ 659.06
Parma Heights	\$ 14,064,661	21,659	\$ 649.37
Canton	\$ 50,963,258	80,806	\$ 630.69
Elyria	\$ 32,605,127	55,953	\$ 582.72
Parma	\$ 43,838,568*	85,021	\$ 515.62
Brunswick	\$ 16,925,000	33,388	\$ 506.92

City and Auditor Kish Recognized for Financial Excellence

The Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting has been awarded to the City of Parma by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). An Award of Financial Reporting Achievement was recently presented to Parma Auditor Dennis Kish for preparing the award-winning 2005 CAFR.

The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management.

"I am honored to have to been selected by GFOA," Kish said. "In addition, the citizens of Parma should be proud and confident that their tax dollars are being accounted for and reported in a responsible way."



Parma Sr. Center has New Hours; Same Service and Offerings

To better serve area seniors, the City of Parma's multipurpose Senior Center will open a half hour earlier Mondays through Fridays. The facility will open at 8 AM and close at 4 PM. Previous hours were from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM.

"We opted for these new hours because we noticed our clients coming in earlier and earlier, and an increase in early morning telephone calls to the Center," said JoAnn Mason, Senior Center Director. "Opening a half hour earlier offers better accessibility to the Center."

Services and programs will not be affected by the new hours. The facility will continue to provide on-site nutritious meals, home delivered meals, wellness program, and a wide range of activities.

Supportive services will continue to be provided by our Human Service Specialist who is a Registered Nurse and Case Manager.

In addition, the Center offers line dancing, ballroom dancing, pinochle, bridge, checkers and billiards.

Parma residents 55 and older are invited to participate in the Senior Center's vast array of programs, services and activities. Residents 60 and older are given priority lunch and transportation programs.

To contact the Senior Center or to obtain more information, call (440) 885-8800.

City Obtaining Big Grants

The City's Economic Development Officer and Grant Writer is paying off in big ways. To date, Shelley Cullins has obtained new grants worth over \$975,000 for the City's Safety, Service, and Engineering Departments. The U.S. EPA, Ohio's Department of Public Safety, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Parma Hospital Health Care Foundation are a few of the new sources for funding.

There is now a budget line-item for Economic Development, and although it is a small budget, the funds will help market Parma to prospective developers to attract new residents and businesses. The City is actively exploring creative options for redevelopment projects in several areas, including the south side of Day Drive. Another project underway is a streetscape design (a more uniform building appearance and landscaping plan) for one of Parma's major entrance corridors.

Parma Community General Hospital



Because we care.

7007 Powers Boulevard | Parma, OH 44129 | www.parmahospital.org

The Heart Center at Parma Hospital – the only independent community hospital in Cuyahoga County – has set a new standard for cardiac care with the inception in January 2006 of a Code STEMI approach to heart attacks. Patients who arrive in the Emergency Department with signs of a heart attack, shown on an EKG as elevated ST levels, set an alert system in motion that calls a multidisciplinary team to the ED. Physicians, nurses, and technicians rush the patient to the Cath Lab so the cardiologist can open the blocked artery and save heart muscle.

Parma's Fire Department is among the area communities equipped with 12-lead EKG machines that enable paramedics to transmit EKGs to the Hospital, giving the ED doctor critical information to alert the Cath Lab team. "Minutes matter," says Jesse Dirando, MD. "Thanks to our team of paramedics, nurses, and doctors, we have beaten the established national benchmark goals and can offer our patients a system to stop a heart attack that few hospitals can."

Construction of New Fire Stations Near Completion

Final touches are being put on Parma's two new fire stations – one located at 5625 Pearl Road and the other at 3311 Snow Road – in time for public Open Houses on Saturday, May 19. Both stations are identical in design and were not funded by tax dollars but through an ambulance fund. Yet another example of the City's financial prudence.



HOMEOWNER TIPS

- ✓ Grass at no time should exceed six (6) inches in height.
- ✓ Garbage cans must have proper fitting covers and stored out of public view.
- ✓ Trash/garbage is not to be placed out for rubbish pick-up before 6 P.M. on the day before scheduled collection.
- ✓ Motor vehicles should be parked on a hard surface driveway or turnabout or other hard surface parking area. (Parking on lawns is prohibited.)
- ✓ Unregistered or inoperable vehicles must be placed in a garage or other suitable structure.
- ✓ Before entering into a contract with a contractor, it is best to contact the Better Business Bureau to ensure that the company is reputable.
- ✓ Before doing any work on your home, contact the Building Department to determine if the contractor is registered with the city and that a permit has been obtained prior to starting the job.